No. 8

amenorrhoea

James

Robt. E. Boulden

admitted March 24. 1819

By
which
not b
„ing
„north
healt
By
is m
from
The
Phys
disc
By
other
Ve
und
Ar

Amenorrhœa

Before entering into a disquisition on the subject which is the object of the following pages it may not be amiss to make some observations respect ing Menstruation in its healthy state, Ame norrhœa being only a departure from the healthy condition of the Menses.

By Menstruation or a flow of the Catamenia is meant a periodical discharge of a fluid from the Uterus resembling arterial blood.

There has been much discussion amongst Physiologists relative to the nature of this discharge, its origin et cetera.

By some it is contended to be arterial, by others venous.

Vesalius for instance said it was Venous, and Ruysch on the contrary that it was Arterial.

I am e
and in
general
„ut d
It has
„ther th
or attenu

credit of
In proof
to mens
some no
But a
some u
some a
during
This
not eas
„unlea
Dur

I am disposed to adopt the latter of these opinions, and indeed I believe it to be the opinion most generally entertained on this subject at the pre-sent day.

It has also been a point much controverted whether this discharge proceeded from the Vagina, or Uterus.

Doctor Hunter it appears deserves the credit of having discovered its real origin the Uterus. In proof of its originality in Utero, women cease to menstruate during pregnancy, which would have no effect on it, if it came from the Vagina

But on the other hand it has been urged that some women do menstruate during pregnancy: some only in the early months; but others during the whole period.

This at first sight might appear a difficulty not easily gotten over. It may however be accounted for in this way.

During the first months of pregnancy

only a
the Fo
correctness
when t
by the
that a
covered
this de
The f
he men
It cer
was it
a poin
the fir
fact, a
He ob
"Mend
"taken
"that

only a small portion of the Uterus is occupyed by the Foetus, of course there is still a considerable secreting surface, and in the latter months when the Uterus is more completly occupyed by the Foetus, may we not reasonably suppose that a small portion of the Vagina may be covered by a secreting membrane from which this discharge may still proceed?

The fluid discharged was long thought to be mere blood differing only in viscidity. It certainly is not a hamorrhage, for if it was it would coagulate, and that it does not is a point conceeded I believe by all.

The celebrated John Hunter was perhaps the first who took notice publicly of this fact, at least in Great Britain.

He observes, that "the blood discharged in "Menstruation, is neither similar to blood "taken from a vein of the same person, nor "to that extravasated by an accident in any

"other part
"changed
"commun
"of the Ob
"by which
"living) p
The blood
of coag
"ning), s
I have n
The
its appe
as the co
In Lapla
women o
months
"ent of n
to sixteen
mystan
In v

"other part of the body; but is a species of blood
"changed, seperated, or thrown off from the
"common mass, by an action of the vessels
"of the Uterus, in a process similar to secretion;
"by which action the blood having lost its
"living principle, it does not so easily coagulate."
The blood tho may be deprived of this power
of coagulation by several causes, as by light-
"ning, some kinds of small pox &c. But of this
I have no certain knowledge.

The time at which this discharge makes
its appearance may be varied by several causes,
as the climate, state of the health et cetera.
In Lapland for instance, according to Linnæus
women only menstruate during the summer
months. In our own climate the commencem
"ent of menstruation is usually from fourteen
to sixteen years of age; tho occasionally it
may take place a little earlier.

In very warm climates we have accounts of

girl men
is not a
become
Altho
"pulee g
His
too large
more es
of the

matter
as most
are dis
of have
then Z
"sicered
Hiddise
to seven
and in
were mo

girls menstruating at eight, and in those it is not an uncommon thing for a woman to become a mother at nine or ten yrs. of age.

As to the quantity discharged, it may be computed generally at from iv to ℥vi.

Hippocrates says ℥xx tho. this is certainly too large a quantity, and should be considered more as an hemorrhage than as a real discharge of the catamenia.

It is indeed a difficult matter to ascertain the precise quantity, as most females from motives of delicacy are disposed to conceal it.

If however, as I have just observed more than ℥vi are discharged it should be considered as an hemorrhage.

This discharge usually continues from five to seven days, sometimes not more than three, and in some cases even nine or ten. If it were more rapid it would be attended with

2

very gre
female
wound.
When w
the dis
cessing
become
ere in
to bam

the m
of the
yet the
instrua
and th
of one
of one h
to be co
rule.

very great inconvenience and the unhappy female would be liable to have her delicacy wounded by many unforseen accidents.
When women arrive at from forty five to fifty the discharge becomes irregular frequently ceasing for three or four months and then becoming excessive. This is an important era in their lives, for if there be a disposition to cancer &c. it now makes its appearance.

Notwithstanding as before mentioned the most common period of the cessation of the menses is from forty five to fifty, yet there are cases mentioned of womens menstruating at sixty, seventy, and at eighty and there is a case related by Doctr. Dewees of one who had this discharge at the age of one hundred and six. Such cases &c. are to be considered as exceptions to a general rule.

Having now briefly spoken of the

nature
of cons
comm- "simpl
proceed
"cries
it cau

and is
"seed
this
"trual
that
time
the m
to be
be ad
argue
elimen
"quent
resom

nature of the Menstrual discharge, its term of continuance, with a few of the most common symptoms attending attending it, I shall proceed to a consideration of some of the theories that have been advanced relative to its causes et cetera.

It was anciently beleived and is by some even at the present day supposed to be under lunar influence. But were this the case then all women should menstruate at the same time; whereas we know that this discharge takes place at any time of the month totally regardless of the moons phases. This however continued to be the belief till the time of Galen; he adopted the theory of plethora. He argued that women take generally as much aliment as men and much less exercise, consequently that it was necessary there should be some way of freeing the system of this sup

„embarra
that th
that c
be easi
these c
acuels
from a
effe
draw
or mig
interrog
„ally h
parts of
effecto
Again
delicac
those
Th
„thora
„ous,

„ erabundance of blood necessarily generated, and
that the Uterus performed this office. But
that it is not dependent on plethora may
be easily proven, for if there be plethora in
these cases it must be caused by five or six
ounces of blood, and the loss of that quantity
from any part of the system ought to be equally
as effectual in relieving it. But this we
know not to be the case; for if twenty, or thirty,
or I might say forty ℥ are taken it does not
interrupt the discharge. Women also occasion
„ ally have vicarious hamorrhages from other
parts of the body, as the nose, lungs &c. without
effecting menstruation in the slightest degree.
Again, we find that women of weak and
delicate constitutions menstruate as copiously
as those of a plethoric habit.

These objections against general ple-
„ thora as the cause, convinced Cullen that it was erro-
„ neous, and he substituted local plethora.

He belie
distended
forced to
was an e
particul
discover
he lost
sometim
he recey
the Cate
The fo
consider
and far
first d
prevent
Here t
legs and
of hatr
insuffic
not, he

He believed that the vessels of the Uterus became distended with blood and were consequently forced to discharge it. But Morgagni who was an accurate observer and who attended particularly to this subject could not discover any distention. Tho we should be led rationally to suppose there must be some turgescence of the vessels, as this would be necessary, to supply the blood from which the Catamenial fluid is secreted.

The first objection to this theory is that it considers menstruation as a mere hamorhage, and farther it could only account for the first discharge. I would then ask what produces the second discharge?

Here Cullen acknowledges himself at a loss and was compell'd to resort to the force of habit as an explanation. This tho is totally insufficient. The influence of habit could not be so soon established; nor could it be

sufficie
„ge. a
up on e
But
second
the pau
„sea, a
by inter
sukling
two mon
the force
„only wo

This obs
that it
the dis
which
„merial
large o
At

sufficient to produce even the third discharge. This theory must therefore be looked upon as very deffective.

But supposing habit to produce the second and all succeeding discharges, its power is sometimes very much diminished, and occasionally totally destroyed by interruption. Would not pregnancy and suckling which put a stop to it for twenty two months be a period sufficient to break the force of habit? In my opinion it certainly would. This theory then we also discard.

Chemistry next offered its aid in this obscure and difficult subject. How tho it was totally defective. It attributed the discharge to a fermentation in the blood which was said to be produced by the venerial desire. This was too absurd to last long and of course was soon discarded.

It is thought by some that certain emotions of the

mine may
„change. a
the case
the there
the eva
the retu
the the
yet he
the dis
conceive
decno
case th
equivale
admit
have a
H. a pr
case of
H. neno
rendec
to the s

mind may have an effect in producing this dis
charge. Doctr Clark of London mentions
the case of a Lady who never had menstruated
tho. There was in the system a disposition to
this evacuation, when hearing suddenly of
the return of her husband from a voyage,
tho. the discharge was not actually induced,
yet he supposes from this intelligence
this disposition farther increased, and she
conceived, notwithstanding the catamenia
did not make their appearance; in this
case the Doctr. thinks the disposition
equivalent to the act itself. We readily
admit that certain operations of the mind
have a powerfull effect on the whol system.
As a proof of which I will mention a
case of a young Lady labouring under
Amenorrhœa who (after all the usual
remedies had proved abortive) was sent
to the sea shore for the purpose of bw=

thing; a
some fro
the sign
underi
after t
To th
the effe
sexual c

tormente
be ente
ex ecu
no claim
unacce
for sha
withstan
the subj
without
place n
all th

" thing; and on lifting a rail to knock down
some fruit, she was very much alarmed at
the sight of a large snake which lay
under it and immediately menstruated.
After this she had her regular periods.

To these emotions then let us ascribe
the effect and not to the gratification of
sexual enjoyment.

I might still proceed
to mention some other theories that have
been entertained relative to the nature,
and causes, of this discharge; but as I make
no claims to originality, should deem it an
unnecessary consumption of time; there-
" fore shall only farther remark, that not-
" withstanding the diversity of opinion on
the subject still most are agreed that
without this discharge having taken
place no woman can be came pregnant.
All therefore that can be said on the

subject
of probable
hypothesis

discharge I
diseases to
are which
attention
irregularity
the deed
excessive,
But I sha
Viz. Rec
comprehens

partial or
arising fr
and old ag
of diseases

subject is but little more than a statement of probabilities founded on conjecture and hypothesis.

Irregularities of the Menstrual discharge I believe to be the most common sources of those diseases to which females are particularly liable; and which for many reasons calls for the particular attention and skill of the practitioners. All irregularities of the Catamenia may be comprehended under the terms Retention, Suppression, excessive, ~~xxxxx~~ deficient, and painfull menstruation. But I shall confine myself to the two first of these VIZ. Retention an Suppression both of which are comprehended under the term

Amenorrhœa

By which we are to understand a partial or total obstruction of the Menses in women arising from other causes than pregnancy, suckling and old age. Doctor Cullen in his classification of diseases places this genus, in the class Locales,

and order
Menstr
section o
of the sub
randi of
sider A
action of
remove the
of the Ute
the secre
viously sta
appearance
the occas
the organ
the age of
upon as ell
provided
cannot
The Ute
certain o

and order Epischeses.

Menstruation as I have before observed is a peculiar secretion of the Uterus and not blood: by this view of the subject we have an explanation of Modus operandi of Emenagogues; and of course we have to consider Amenorrhoea an interruption of the secretory action of the Uterus, and that the medicines which remove this, act so as to restore the healthy condition of the Uterus; on the precise condition of which the secretion depends. Notwithstanding I have previously stated that the Catamenia usually make their appearance between the age of fourteen and sixteen still occasionally we have astonishing precosity; all the organs of a woman appearing to be developed at the age of twelve or thirteen. As this is not looked upon as disease so a retardation two or three years; provided every thing else be proper and regular, cannot be called disease.

The Uterus and ovaria must have arrived at certain state of perfection before this discharge

can ta
years b
When a
eighteen
uncay, a
cases the
exercise,
If know
it is unn
times by
of face b
make use
prescript
Rheuban
patient
an agree
way we g
the Phy
If in
must be

can take place, and in some it may require a few years longer than in others, to arrive at this state.

When a woman in this Country arrives at the age of eighteen without having menstruated she generally becomes uneasy, and often a Physician is consulted. If in such cases she is not in good general health, we may prescribe exercise; particularly on horseback, with some tonic.

If however there be nothing the matter but retention it is unnecessary to resort to medicines: tho some times by way of complying with the solicitations of our patient, or her friends, we are compelled to make use of some remedy; in these cases a very good prescription is bread pills coloured with a little Rhubarb. By this means from the faith of the patient in her physician these pills may afford an agreeable stimulus to the mind, and in this way we gain time; nature effects the cure and the Physician gets the credit.

If on the contrary there be general disease it must be treated without any regard to the Retention.

We cannot
tell it is
When a gen
Aloetic
compoun
But
must firs
system a
Under cer
ministra
of Iron p
tincture
combined
of menstr
even th
Madde
particular
The close i
day.

The

We cannot develop the Uterus therefore must wait till it is stimulated into action by the Ovaries. When a gentle stimulus is necessary small doses of Aloetic medicines are very good. The Aloetic or compound Rheub. pill should be freely employed.

But in this as in all other complaints we must first learn the exact condition of the system and apply them accordingly.

Under certain conditions of the system the administration of tonics particularly the preperations of Iron prove beneficial, such as Chalybiate waters tincture of Muriated Iron, or the Carbonas ferri combined with Myrrh. When we discover symptoms of menstruation as pains in the back, extending down the thighs &c we may then assist.

Madder at this time is highly recommended particularly by Doctr. Dewees of this City. The dose is from ʒß to ʒj twice or three times a day.

The tincture of Guaiac is also very good

ba is too st
he activity
„fe its exe
of the bowe

Besides
it has been
the true ac
„tain Emet
part of the
not judic
they do not
such mea
If retention
ot ts, the b
in a degree
system, an
exercise as
If however
the disease
must then

but is too stimulating to be used first. If there be activity in the pulse we always draw blood be
" fore its exhibition. We are also to attend to the state of the bowels.

Besides this general ~~[illegible]~~ plan of treatment, it has been also proposed to excite more directly the Uterine action by marriage, and the use of cer-
" tain Emenagogues. With respect to the latter part of the proposial, I am of opinion that if not judiciously employed they will do harm, and they do not generally succeed without the use of such means as tend to improve the general system. If retention should be accompanyed with a plethoric state, the best plan is to use purgatives regularly, in a degree proportioned to their effect on the system, and make the patient take as much exercise as she can without producing fatigue. If however we should not succeed in curing the disease by this general plan of treatment we must then resort to the use of certain articles

known by
of which
The
is looked up
in which
root, or in
is generally
it is apt
bine around
man &c.
in the two
effort is a
sided w
causing
advised to
the precau
effect it
and disgus
bition th
respectin

known by the name of Emenagogues. The first of which I shall mention is the Polygala Senega.

This under certain conditions of the system is looked upon as one of the best articles. The form in which it is usually exhibited is either the powder, root, or in decoction; but the saturated decoction is generally preferred. If it excite nausea; which it is apt to do in a large quantity we then combine aromatics with it, as orange peel, or cinnamon &c. The usual dose is from three to ℥iv in the twenty four hours; but when the menstrual effort is at hand and untill the discharge is induced we should urge it as far as possible without causing its rejection. In the interval we are advised to lay it aside for a week or two; without this precaution, if the medicine does not loose its effect it is apt to become exceedingly nauseous and disgusting to the patient. During its exhibition the system is to be kept well regulated. Respecting this article, I shall only farther

remar

all po

a prob

used w

It was

Cullen

in the

it is fa

in some

is X or

as and

Cullen

"itiesa

"thou

by the

recom

"rides

remark that I suspect it may be used in almost all forms of Amenorrhœa, if in prescribing it, a proper regard be had to the condition of the system.

The Savin is also an article which has been used with some advantage as an emenagogue. It was employed half a century ago by Dr. Home. Cullen discouraged its use, and the confidence in the remedy was hence very much lessened; but it is lately revived and is used with much benefit in some weak forms of Amenorrhœa. The dose is ℥ or ℥vj grs. three or four times a day.

Madder as I before stated has been used as an emenagogue, and not without some benefit. Cullen believed it possessed of some injurious qualities and hence rejected it: but by other Authors it has been highly extolled, particularly by the late Doctr. Barton.

There are several other articles which are recommended as emenagogues, such as Cantharides, the common Rosemary, Phosphorus et cet.

but in t
the great
powerfu
green, i
and exce
is by same
and as p
organs o
article b

Asper
to cases
for freq
for its c
but less
Salinde

being and
of the th
ated to a
there are

but in the exhibition of the latter of these articles the greatest caution is necessary it being a most powerfull remedy. Even in the dose of 1/10 of a grain, it is said to produce a universal glow and excitement, and when properly regulated is by some supposed to be a very important article; and as possessing a more direct tendency to the organs of generation than almost any other article of the Materia Medica.

As yet I have only spoken of those medicines suited to cases where extreme atony and debility exists; for frequently a mere relaxation exists requiring for its cure a set of remedies more permanent but less violent in their action than the above: I allude to Tonics.

They are not properly Emmenagogues; being only so in asmuch as they restore the tone of the Uterus. The tonicks most usually resorted to are some of the preperations of Iron; these are considered best, and their exhibition

haulee lee
with, exce
usedict
most com
I shall m
ose of p
in cases of
ady; th
ment in th
combined
aomate
unnecess
it more a

in an El
but there
is in the
also with

should be accompanied by the use of the cold bath, exercise, friction, change of air, a generous diet et cetera. As amongst the best and most common of the chalybeate preperations; I shall mention the Limature ferri in the dose of from V to X grs and the Carbonas ferri in doses of from X to XX grs several times a day; the latter of these however, being unpleasant in this form, is scarcely ever given so; but combined with Peruv. bark, ginger, or some aromatic. The following formula is recommended by Doctr Chapman as rendering it more agreeable

℞ Rust of Iron ʒii
Peruv. Bark..... ʒi
Pow.d Ginger ʒii Syrup q.s. to make into an Electuary to be given pro re nata.

But there is still another mode of exhibiting it; in the form of Chalybiate wine. Agreeing also with the Drs prescription is the following

R

"

"

Port wine,

and decan

It is th

gum with

castor, et

is, that th

then asen

ficial in

An enorm

my

to the trea

disease; s

be left w

attention

overrunne

made an

℞ Rust of Iron ℥ß
" Gentian ... ℥ß
" Orange peel ... ℥ß. put into a bottle of Port wine, expose to a moderate heat for two days and decant for use.

It is the practice with some to unite fœtid gums with chalybiates; as Asafœtida, Musk, Castor, et cet. My own conviction however is, that there is little good to be derived from them as emenagogues; tho. they may prove beneficial in relieving Hysteria connected with Amenorrhœa.

In addition to what I have said in my ~~humble~~ humble manner relative to the treatment necessary to this form of the disease; I shall only add that unless the bowels be kept well regulated, and a corresponding attention be paid to the Arterial system, all our remedies will at last prove inefficient and unavailing. Before however dismissing

the subject
tions on
anticipated
form of the
treatment
it only re
we shall
Suppose
a variet
of the m
body, or e
stomach
but when
and obste
or dropsy
the attemp
but in to
case, in
opto int
source of

the subject entirely, permit me to make a few obser-
vations on suppression of the Catamenia; but having
anticipated much relative to the treatment of this
form of the disease in my preceding remarks, the
treatment necessary to both being very similar;
it only remains that I make a few observations
and I shall have done.

Suppression of the Menses may be produced
by a variety of causes, such as violent agitations
of the mind, cold applied to the surface of the
body, or even cold substances taken into the
stomach are said to produce the same effect.
but when it is a consequence of some chronick
and obstinate disease, such as Consumption,
or dropsey, it would be both useless and hurtfull
to attempt by stimulating drugs to restore it.
But in those cases where fear, or some removable
cause, inducing debility of the frame, it is pro-
per to interfere, both as the suppression is a
source of anxiety to the patient, and also as the

natural
general
to recolle
under aff
It may o
ten in
the same
the Rove
spectoha
such as
Ab
spected
some gre
an Emet
warm ba
But in
be overw
Should the
the in some
the evacua

natural means of restoration tend to amend the general system. It is proper in our curative plan, to recollect that suppression may take place under different circumstances of the constitution. It may occur with a debilitated Chlorotic condition in which case we are to proceed much in the same way as in Retention; and along with the tonick plan of treatment, it will be proper to have recourse to the use of Emenagogues, such as Savin, Hellebore, Myrrh, Madder &c.

About the time the Catamenia are expected to make their appearance we may derive great benefit from the exhibition of an Emetic, accompanyed with the use of the warm bath, Semicupium, or pediluvium. But in Suppression, as in Retention we are to be governed very much by the state of the pulse. Should the pulse be strong we detract bloodly freely tho in some instances the pulse is rather weak to bear this evacuation, yet there is too much action to use

stimulant
the case of
this does n
stimulation
Tinct. of
recommen

s begin
a day.
faeces ap
in which
The B
state is c
pression o
a remedy o
tively laid
some other

stimulants in such cases we may exhibit Madder in the dose of ʒi two or three times a day. If however this does not succeed and we wish something more stimulating we may then resort to the use of the Vol. Tinct. of Guaiac. The following formula is highly recommended by Doctr. Dewees

℞ Gum Guaiac ℥viii
Carbonate of Soda ʒiii
All spice ..... ℥j
Proof Spts. ..... ℔ij

To be given in the dose of ʒi twice or three times a day. This prescription the Dr. says has never failed in his hands of effecting a cure in cases in which it was proper to use it.

The Black Hellebore as I have previously stated is considered a valuable article in Suppression of the Catamenia, this appears to be a remedy of ancient date, and was for a while entirely laid aside as being less efficacious than some others; but its reputation has been lately

reviews in
this City
to be one of
of its most
overcome
the use of
in the for
of the p
X. XV to

In a
best suit
of prohibi
necessary
of this v
and two
latter of
extreme
is consid
ration m

Ho

revived in this Country and in Europe: and in this City is by some of the ablest Physicians thought to be one of the best Emenagogues: Dr. Physic is one of its most sanguine advocates: he says he scarcely ever commences the cure of Amenorrhoea without the use of the Black Hellebore. It is given either in the form of Tinct, or the powd. leaves. The dose of the powder is VIII or X grs., of the Tinct. from XXV to XXX Gtts.

In addition to what I have said of these remedies best suited to the cure of Amenorrhoea their mode of exhibition, and the numerous circumstances necessary to be attended to in the treatment of this very distressing complaint, I shall only add two others: Blisters and a Salivation, the latter of which however is only resorted to in extreme in extreme cases; and by the Practitioner is considered a dernier ressource, or the Ultima ratio medicorum.

Having thus delivered my observations

relative
in as can
limited
subject u
hit to do
the sever
sity, wa
my feel

To
small tro
them to
dangmen
ties of i
one him

Wh
that you
use of s
I am b

relative to the nature, and cure of Amenorrhoea, in as concise a manner as my time, and the limited experience which I have had on the subject would admit, I shall now close this Essay: but to do this without an acknowledgment to the several Medical Professors of this University, would be a breach of that duty which my feelings claim.

To you therefore Gentlemen; at least this small tribute of my esteem is due. Permit me then to present you with the sincere acknowledgments of a pupil, for the many opportunities of improvement your Lectures have afforded him.

With the assurance of my best wishes, that you may continue to enjoy all the pleasure of success in the science of Medicine, I now bid you,

Adieu.